



# NSPP NEWSLETTER

## RECTOR'S MESSAGE



### Re-wiring the Iron Cage: AI and the Future of Bureaucracy

Traditionally, bureaucracies have cosied up inside what Max Weber famously called the “Iron Cage.” Ironically, it is within this very cage - ruled by hierarchy, procedures, and the authority of written law, that they found their greatest comfort. A bureaucrat typically weighs a case before him and forms his judgment by leaning upon the standard texts of rules and statutes. This alliance between the mind and the paper has sustained a system of procedural rationality that lends government its order, stability, and accountability.

Reform, in this setting, has usually meant tinkering and streamlining a process here, simplifying a rule there, and at best digitizing it. In other words, adapting to the changing environment by opening a small window - letting in just enough air into the cage to keep the chamber livable.

This time, however, a new player is on the scene - one far more ambitious and radically different in its construction and method. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is not just another tool of efficiency; it is an actor in its own right, capable of challenging the bureaucrat’s traditional claim to judgment, expertise, and even authority. With the advent of AI, the golden age of bureaucratic rule, spread over the past two centuries, stands on the brink of being radically redefined. Bureaucracies of every creed and flavor, whether the faceless desk man of the West or the charismatic public administrator of the Subcontinent, will now be compelled to negotiate their own distinctive arrangements with this new arrival. Some may be forced to share legal authority; others, both power and charisma. And those that remain in denial for too long may well encounter the kind of rude awakening that Ghalib once warned of in a verse:

میں نے کہا کہ بزم ناز چلیے غیر سے تھی  
سن کر ستم ظریف نے مجھ کو اٹھا دیا کہ یوں

Across the globe, governments, research institutes, and policy networks are beginning to engage with this question in their own ways. In Pakistan too, multiple agencies are contributing to the development of knowledge on how AI will intersect with governance. At the National School of Public Policy (NSPP), we see it as our responsibility to contribute to bureaucratic readiness, to prepare for an honorable handshake with AI in the near future. The ongoing simulation exercise for the cohort of senior civil servants attending Training Program NMC 123, on “Transforming Bureaucracy through AI,” is a step in this direction, wherein the officers themselves will develop plans to rationalize the structures of their ministries while integrating AI into regular functions. The upcoming two-day Annual Conference on AI and Public Policy, being organized by NIPP, will bring together academics, researchers, analysts, and public servants from across the country to deliberate on the shape of things to come.

The eventual aim is that we do not merely adapt to AI, but learn to lead with it - rewiring the iron cage into a more open, agile, and forward-looking architecture of governance.

**Dr Muhammad Jamil Afaqi**  
Rector NSPP

## Certificate Award Ceremony of NMC 122 and SMC 37

NSPP celebrated the successful culmination of NMC 122 and SMC 37 with a Certificate Award Ceremony on Friday, 16 May 2025. Held at the newly inaugurated NSPP auditorium, the event was presided over by Rector Dr. Ijaz Munir. He eulogized relentless efforts of the participants and dedication of the faculty throughout the course. The ceremony concluded with warm wishes for the officers as they stepped into their next leadership roles.



## Academic Activities during NMC 122

### PD on Parliamentary Oversight

An engaging panel discussion on 'Parliamentary Oversight in the Public Policy Domain' was held on Wednesday, 16 April 2025. The session featured Mr. Mushahid Hussain Sayed, veteran politician and leading intellectual, and Dr. Saeed Shafqat, a renowned scholar of public policy. Together, they explored the evolution and

effectiveness of the function of parliamentary oversight in Pakistan, drawing comparisons with global models. The discussion, amongst other things, shed light on the role of parliamentary committees, and how these institutions interact with ministries to ensure accountability in governance.

### Special Domain Exercise (SDE)



The SDE challenges involve participants to analyze a national issue and develop a strategic policy response, demonstrating their understanding of key national issues.

During SDE four clusters of participants worked dedicatedly on the topics of Rule of Law, Balochistan, Climate and Advanced Technologies and produced comprehensive policy papers, presented later to renowned experts of the respective fields.

### Policy Atelier



The participants of NMC 122 showcased informed policy analysis through the Policy Atelier exercise, tackling pressing national issues, from Pakistan's foreign policy to pension reforms, internal security challenges, governance frameworks, and energy security.

Each group analyzed systemic challenges, identified opportunities, and proposed reforms in their area of study thereby reflecting NSPP's commitment to equipping leaders with insights necessary for national progress.

## Policy Praxis

As part of the Policy Praxis exercise, participants visited various public sector organizations to observe and analyze field practices and assess how theoretical concepts are applied in practice. One group examined the working of the Metropolitan Corporation Lahore (MCL), conducting field visits and interactions with its officers and staff to understand its internal culture and service delivery systems, on 13 May 2025. The group analyzed the disconnect between MCL's public image and internal realities, highlighting gaps in autonomy, coordination, and morale.



## Inauguration of the New Building

The new NSPP building was formally inaugurated by Dr Ijaz Munir, Rector of NSPP, on 15 May 2025. NSPP's two integral units, the National Institute of Public Policy (NIPP) and the Executive Development Institute (EDI), are housed in this building.

The building is a hub of research, intellectual exchange and executive training. With cutting-edge amenities, including a fully



equipped conference hall, a seminar hall, and a committee room, it provides an ideal setting for research, policy formulation and capacity building for the participants from the public and private sector.

## Book Launch Ceremony



The launch of two books: Pakistan Administrative Staff College: Rise of a Premier Civil Service Training Institute (1960–2025) and NMC: A Journey Together was held in the new building. Authored by Dr Kiran Khursheed (PAS), the books mark an important milestone, an endeavour initiated by the Rector, in preserving NSPP's institutional memory. Dr Ijaz Munir's keen interest and continued efforts in documenting the history of the institution played a pivotal role in this initiative. The event was attended by serving and retired civil servants, as well as prominent members of civil society.

## A Meeting with Ms. Noor-ul-Huda Shah



The participants of NMC 122 had the unique opportunity to meet renowned Urdu author, dramatist and poet, Ms. Noor-ul-Huda Shah on 30 April 2025 as a 'Book Club' activity. This special interaction provided an intellectually stimulating break session from the rigorous academic schedule, sparking thought-provoking discussions.

## Cultural Visits during NMC 122

Extra-curricular and cultural activities in the course of NMC offer participants a refreshing break from their rigorous academic schedules, providing opportunities for personal growth, and exploration outside of the classroom. During NMC 122, participants had the chance to visit a diverse range of destinations, including the historic Shalamar Gardens, Hiran Minar, the Wagah Border, and the Lahore Safari Park. Each location offered a glimpse into the region's history, beauty and culture.



## Farewell Dinner NMC 122

NSPP hosted a farewell dinner in honour of the outgoing participants of NMC 122 on 14 May 2025. The event provided an opportunity for faculty and participants to reflect on their shared experiences and achievements. In his keynote address, Rector NSPP, Dr. Ijaz Munir, reflected on significant episodes of his career, underscoring the enduring importance of upholding the ethical and professional values once regarded as the hallmark of the civil service. The evening was suffused with heartfelt interactions and a sense of accomplishment marking the completion of the training program.



## Inauguration of NMC 123 and the Refurbished NMC Hall

The Pakistan Administrative Staff College (PASC) welcomed a new batch of officers at the inaugural ceremony of NMC 123.



Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives of Pakistan, was the Chief Guest of the ceremony. On the occasion, he also inaugurated the newly refurbished NMC Hall.



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## **Dr. Ijaz Munir retires as Rector NSPP**

Dr. Ijaz Munir retired as Rector NSPP on 16 May 2025. During his tenure, the institution made substantial progress in both academic and infrastructural development. The nomenclature of National Management College (NMC) was restored to Pakistan Administrative Staff College (PASC) and the National Institute of Management (NIMs) to National Institute of Public Administration (NIPAs), under the umbrella of NSPP. His leadership modernized the training system, upgraded facilities, and enriched the intellectual profile of the institution. In doing so, NSPP moved away from traditional

lectures towards more interactive and practical modes of learning, focusing on syndicate work, workshops, and experiential exercises. Key innovations included the Public Policy Atelier, Public Speaking Exercise, Policy Critique and Studying Policy Praxes in Practical Environments. Specialized activities such as the Directors' Training Program, Strategic Policy Dialogue Series, and Workshops on Islamic Finance broadened the scope of learning. The Journal of Pakistan Administration (JPA) was accredited by HEC in Y-Category.

Administratively, NSPP prepared its first Annual Reports, launched Coffee Table Books, and established cultural and institutional landmarks such as the Sadequain Gallery and Alumni Hall. In the IT domain, a state-of-the-art lab, campus-wide connectivity, e-filing, and a comprehensive HR Management System were introduced. A new office block with a high-tech auditorium, upgraded classrooms and hostels, solarization of the campus, and modernization of external electrification comprised infrastructural achievements. These contributions elevated NSPP's academic excellence, institutional efficiency, and capacity to meet contemporary governance challenges.

## **Visiting Personalities at NSPP**

The NIPAs, constituent units of the NSPP, invited several distinguished guests to share their interests, thoughts, and experiences with the participants of SMC-57 and MCMC-43. These talks featured open conversations encouraging candid exchange of ideas and intellect in the form of conversations unhindered by academic formalism.

### **Visiting Personalities at NIPAs**



Mr. Aftab Ur Rehman Rana  
Managing Director, PTDC. Lecture on  
Pakistan's Tourism Landscape at NIPA  
Peshawar on 13 May 2025



Mr. Mohammad Jahanzeb Khan  
Secretary to the Apex Committee of SIFC.  
Lecture on shifting mindsets to achieve  
Pakistan's 2030 SDG Agenda at NIPA  
Peshawar on 13 May 2025



Mr. Muhammad Ishfaq Khattak  
Former Chairman Railways. Lecture  
on "Framework of Public Policy in  
Pakistan" at NIPA Peshawar on 15  
April 2025

## Visiting Personalities at NIPAs



Dr. Hafeez A. Pasha  
Former Federal Minister for Finance and  
Former Chairman Advisory Panel of  
Economists, Planning Commission. Lecture  
on "Fundamentals of Microeconomics for  
Public Policy at NIPA Peshawar on 18 April  
2025



Mr. Justice (R) Anwar-ul-Haq  
Former Chief Justice of Lahore High Court.  
Keynote address on public unawareness  
regarding legal rights at NIPA Lahore on  
26 May 2025



Mr. Zulfiqar Ahmed Cheema  
Former Inspector General of Police.  
Lecture on "Rule of Law" at NIPA  
Lahore on 21 April 2025



Mr. Fakir Syed Aijaz Uddin OBE  
Pakistani historian, academic, and business  
executive. Keynote address on Pakistan's  
economy, foreign relations, and national  
identity at NIPA Lahore on  
12 June 2025



Mr. Ayaz Ahmad  
Member (Industry Development),  
Information Science & Technology  
Department, Government of Sindh. Lecture  
on "E-Governance and Public Service  
Delivery" at NIPA Karachi on 2 May 2025



Mr. Abdul Kabir Kazi  
Managing Director, Sindh Education  
Foundation. Lecture on the role and  
performance of local government  
institutions in Karachi at NIPA  
Karachi on 2 May 2025

## National Institute of Public Policy (NIPP)

### Roundtable Discussions: The Indus Waters Dilemma: War, Woes & Way Forward

The National Institute of Public Policy (NIPP) hosted a high-level roundtable, opened by Dean Dr. Naveed Elahi, to address India's unilateral suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty. This action was unanimously condemned by panelists as a grave violation of international law and a direct threat to regional stability.



Prominent experts, including former Foreign Secretary Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, environmental lawyer Ahmad Rafay Alam, former Ambassador Major General (R) Noel Khokhar, Professor Dr. Seemi Waheed, and former PEPCO head Tahir Basharat Cheema, called for a unified national response. They urged Pakistan to diplomatically challenge the move at forums like the UN Security Council, while also stressing the urgent domestic need to formulate a comprehensive national water policy, implement a robust management framework, and accelerate the construction of new reservoirs to ensure long-term water security. A formal report detailing these recommendations is currently being prepared for submission to the government.



### **3rd NIPP Internship Program Concludes**

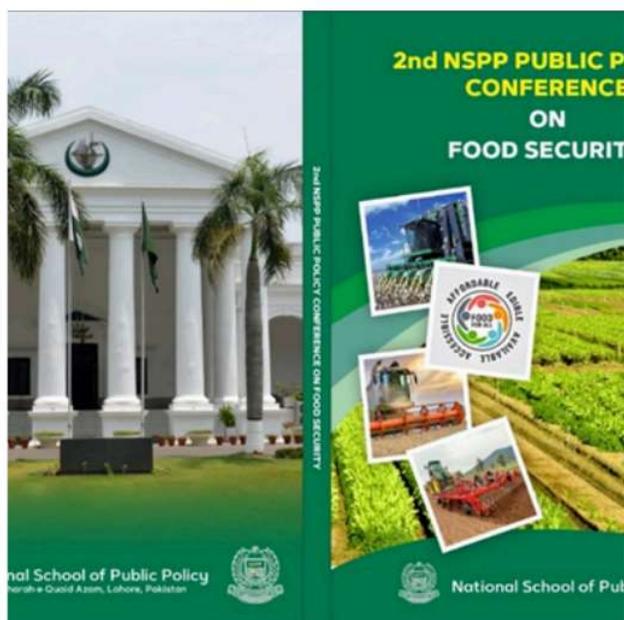
The third edition of the NIPP Internship Program, held from April to May 2025, concluded successfully with the participation of a dynamic group of young researchers and policy enthusiasts. The program offered interns a unique opportunity to engage with

issues, contribute to research projects, attend expert-led sessions, and gain exposure to the functioning of public policy institutions. Interns also actively participated in organizing roundtable discussions, drafting policy briefs, and supporting research publications. The program concluded with a certificate distribution ceremony, where senior faculty members appreciated the interns' dedication, intellectual curiosity, and contribution to the policy discourse at NIPP.

### **Report on 2nd Annual NSPP Public Policy Conference on Food Security**

The National Institute of Public Policy (NIPP) officially published the detailed proceedings of the 2nd NSPP Public Policy Conference on Food Security, held on August 2024. The report encapsulates key thematic discussions, expert analyses, and forward-looking policy recommendations presented during the two-day conference, which brought together a diverse group of stakeholders including federal and provincial ministers, senior government officials, international development partners, researchers, and representatives from farmers' associations. Serving as a vital policy document, the report aims to support evidence-based decision-making and foster institutional collaboration for achieving long-term food and nutrition

security in Pakistan. It is now available for policymakers, academics, and development practitioners engaged in shaping the future of Pakistan’s food systems.



## Executive Development Institute (EDI)

The Executive Development Institute is an integral unit of the National School of Public Policy (NSPP), Lahore which holds a range of training workshops to foster the professional development of executives and officers across public and private sectors. Accordingly, EDI conducted a One-Day Training Workshop on “Negotiation Skills” on Wednesday 07<sup>th</sup> May, 2025. The “Negotiation Skills” training workshop aimed at enhancing leadership and decision-making in complex governance contexts, attracting 49 participants from diverse public and private sectors. Key organizations included Pakistan Stock Exchange, NESPAK and various private sector entities, providing a platform for cross-sector collaboration on advanced negotiation strategies. Dr. Naveed Elahi, Dean EDI, emphasized the commitment to empowering professionals with skills for effective public policy solutions, while guest speakers

the importance of communication and strategic negotiation techniques. The workshop concluded with certificate distribution, reinforcing the value of negotiation skills in professional leadership. A detailed report on “Negotiation Skills” training workshop has been published which is also available on the NSPP website at the EDI Publications’ Portal.

## Memorandum of Understanding between NSPP and SNGPL

On May 16, 2025, the National School of Public Policy (NSPP) and Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a customized mid-career training program for SNGPL officers by EDI. The program aims to enhance participants' skills in leadership, finance, management and technology. Key figures at the signing ceremony included Mr. Muhammad Ismael Qureshi, Chairman, SNGPL and Dr. Ijaz Munir, Rector NSPP along with senior officials from both organizations. This partnership aims to foster professional growth and prepare SNGPL officers for industry challenges.

Additionally, a report on the policy dialogue titled “Energy Crisis: Problem, Impact & Solutions”, conducted on 19-20 November, 2024 has been published and distributed amongst stakeholders as well as to relevant federal and provincial ministries / divisions/ departments.



## Inland Study Tour

The Inland Study Tours (ISTs) were conducted at the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA) campuses located in Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Peshawar, and Karachi.



Participants of 37th SMC from NIPA Karachi visiting Gilgit-Baltistan



Participants of 37th SMC from NIPA Lahore at Engro Powergen, Qadirpur



Participants of 43rd MCMC from NIPA Peshawar visiting Lawrence College, Murree



Participants of 43rd MCMC from NIPA Peshawar visiting NAVTTC, Islamabad

## Co-Curricular Activities

Participants from the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA) campuses located in Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Peshawar, and Karachi took part in various co-curricular activities.





## **Editorial Team**

**Dr Naveed Elahi**  
**Ms Saira Imdad Ali**  
**Mr Jahanzeb Waheed**

National School of Public Policy  
87- Shahrah e Quaid e Azam, Lahore.

Email: [polycypulse.nipp@nspp.gov.pk](mailto:polycypulse.nipp@nspp.gov.pk)  
PABX: No. 042 9920 2943-44  
[www.nspp.gov.pk](http://www.nspp.gov.pk)

